

sudden movements on their part. We were pretty close and could hear them jabbering. When we left the trenches after 48 hours we were supposed to go into rest for 48 hours, but on the second day at 9 a.m. we were rushed out and taken up to the line. From 10 a.m. onwards till 1.30 a.m. (15 hours) we were lying out in a field under shell fire; they were bursting on every side within a few yards of us. Luckily we did not lose very many. The day was just a great nightmare, and I cannot write about it. We were expecting at any moment to have to charge. However, we were withdrawn at 2 a.m., and went back to our billets, and I lay down dog tired, only to be awakened at 4.45 a.m. to take up a position at a barrier outpost on the main road. We were relieved soon after 7 o'clock, and again went to billets and actually washed and shaved! We stayed there till 5 o'clock (p.m.), when we were finally relieved and marched down here to the rest camp. I certainly was thankful, and slept without waking until this morning. Until 12 noon we were occupied in scraping off mud, and then I had an hour's leave and went into the town to get a decent meal. Anyway, we are here till to-morrow, when I hear we may go back to the trenches or may move further off. We know nothing just now, and simply have to live for the moment. I am well except for a bit of rheumatism and a sore throat. There are compensations, you know, and we are a cheery crowd sometimes. Last night you might have thought it was a march home to hear us all singing and being cheered on our arrival here by the inhabitants. How I wish I dare tell you about the situation the last couple of days in the line; but, of course, I cannot, and must only wait until I see you again. Several German shells were sent over here yesterday (six miles from the firing line) and killed about sixteen, wounding more. My old company officer came out yesterday from London and asked me to be his servant, but although I was awfully pleased about it

I have refused. Rumours out here are just the limit. Every moment someone comes in with one, and we always fear the hopeful ones are not true. Well, I must wind up and get some tea.

H. ST. L. FEILING, London Scottish.

MORE REMARKS BY SMILEY POG.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—With the permission of Smiley Pog's "Jane" these remarks are given in modern spelling, for the dear Smiley is rather archaic at times. It is earnestly to be hoped that he will never know that we have *dared* to use our discretion in the matter!]

What is a mood? Something intensely disagreeable, when indicative of Jane! She seems to be in one at present, so I am going to leave her severely alone and say a few words about some customs of the Brazilians at table. They get on her nerves, and when you hear about them perhaps you will not be surprised.

First of all, no one dresses for dinner—I mean they do not "evening" dress—but they do at times wash their hands in an apollogetic sort of way after dinner is announced. Is this the right way to spell this word? In any case, I 'spect they do it to propitiate the gods! Then there is no assembling in the drawing-room, but everyone strolls in to the dining-room when and how they like, the gentlemen often sitting down first and the ladies dropping casually into their chairs.

Soup is served. Our hostess this evening spread her left arm and hand well over the table, resting the right elbow on it, and bringing the spoon up to the level of her mouth, when the soup was "sirrured" up from the point.

Next came fish. Heads of fish are much appreciated, and the whole thing goes into the mouth, there to be manipulated and dropt out on to the plate when done with; sometimes bones are taken up in the fingers and sucked.

The meat course followed. Salt, if you want it, is to be taken with your knife from a tiny salt-cellar; but you can't have mustard if you want it ever so! Bye the bye, the arrangement of the table is rather like that of a lodging-house, only more so. Flowers in a pink glass vase are sometimes to be seen in the centre, no corner spoons or cruets; knife and fork together on the right side of the plate, and a tumbler—no wine glasses—upside down for each person. As soon as you have finished, sometimes before, your plate is whisked away to be washed up with others in the pantry which leads off the dining-room. From the dinner-table one hears the clatter and splash in the water, at times almost drowning the conversation. As soon as the meat is served the dish is carried away; in fact, by the end of dinner, breakfast, or tea, there is only bare cloth left, not always very "snowey"!

To continue the menu. Fruit comes next, but no finger glasses. Jane is allowed to dip *her* fingers in a little bowl, specially prepared for her, *if she has been eating tangerines!* The correct way to eat this fruit seems to be to put a section in your mouth, get all the juice out, lean well over the table and drop the pulp and pips on to your plate. The first time that Jane saw this done by a lady she thought she must be feeling "not quite well." Then another thing she notices is that grapes should be eaten so as to get through as many as possible in a given time. This is the way to do it: take a grape, put it into your mouth, get another ready between your thumb and first finger, then drop the skin of the eaten grape into the palm of your hand, at the same time putting the fresh grape into the mouth; these movements to be continued as quickly as possible, and as long as the supply lasts. *N.B.*—You may help yourself by *ones* from the dish if you like. After the fruit come the "doces" (pronounced *doses*, but meaning "*sweets*"!). Sometimes very delicious and often eaten with cheese. After these follows coffee, when

the men smoke, and the ladies remain at table or not, as they please. Add to this universal conversation shouted and screamed by everyone to each other, with wild gesticulations on the part of the hostess, by whom Jane sits and whose movements are so energetic that it is well to be ready to turn the other cheek also!

This is what happens every night, so I am not surprised that Jane is rather "touchy" when she first comes up to the schoolroom. But she soon quiets down when she sees my friendly grin!

ON THE POSSIBILITY OF DOING P.U.S. WORK WHILE KEEPING STRICTLY TO THE TIME-TABLES.

It seems to me that this subject may be taken in more than one way. The title at once suggests two thoughts, with which I propose to deal separately.

First, is it possible to take the lessons of two or more classes at the exact time prescribed in the Time-table? and

Second, is it possible to accomplish the term's programme without giving any more time to one subject and any less to another than that allotted?

In other words, how far is it possible to do the P.U.S. work keeping strictly to the Time-table *and* the Programme?

For many simple and obvious reasons with which I scarcely like to burden you it is quite impossible in a school to take all the lessons at the set time and for the set period. For instance—

The school morning is half an hour shorter than that of the printed Time-table.

There is no Saturday school.

One cannot afford half an hour out of such short hours for drill, singing, play, and dancing in Ia and Ib.

Where there is a considerable number of children they must, as a rule, all drill together, and all play together.

Class IV cannot sing daily while the rest are playing.

The big girls are the making of play-time. They have learnt to use ten minutes so well.

And who has not known the visiting master or mistress for languages, art, music, etc.? They by no means always come in the afternoon, and people teaching privately will know as much about this as I do, and far more about outside classes that their pupils may attend at all kind of hours.

All this entails an interchange of lessons; and the music teacher often monopolizes the piano and a room for two whole days a week, quite upsetting the drill, and odd ten minutes devoted in the Time-table to Tonic Sol-fa, French, and German songs.

Then there are less apparent reasons for deviation. For example—

(1) Reading, writing, and number must be secured to Ia before the school "break," after which they go home. In the Time-table one or other of these subjects falls after drill and play each day.

(2) Beside the morning work there is an afternoon Time-table to be planned; and painting, handicrafts, therefore are relegated to the latter in the case of Ib. (Natural History is also a good subject to omit from a morning Time-table which is twenty minutes shorter than the prescribed.)

(3) French in Classes II and III, coming at the same time twice a week, presents some difficulty, especially as children in the former are not, I believe, supposed to read or write.

(4) On certain days ten minutes after Class II has begun Geography, Grammar, English History, and Natural History Ib is due to have Painting or Handicrafts. This is very difficult to arrange, and the alternative of taking Classes II and III working together in the same subject where there is

only one teacher necessarily involves a change of hour for one or other of these lessons.

As to the possibility of doing the work while giving the fixed amount of time to each subject, irrespective of the hour at which the lesson is given, my own experience in general subjects is almost entirely confined to the lower classes, and to the others in languages.

When I speak of "doing the work" I mean, besides the actual accomplishment of the set amount in Bible lessons, History, Geography, etc., a really satisfactory progress in reading, writing, dictation, arithmetic, and so on.

These are the main points which have impressed me:

(a) That with a number of children ten minutes does not seem enough for reading and French where one teacher has to take Ia and Ib together. Perhaps it is enough for writing in Ia if all books are to hand and all pencils in good order, but I prefer a quarter of an hour or even twenty minutes.

(b) That it is practically impossible to keep to the programme in Arithmetic. A new pupil must always go on where reason demands, or, rather, if he chance to be 9 years old or more, must invariably go back and unlearn, or at least learn the reason of a few of his many already acquired parrot-like operations and formulæ.

(c) That in repetition I never remember a class containing several who cannot read, satisfactorily learning three hymns, two poems, and two passages of Scripture.

(d) That with children who learn slowly it is worth while to devote a portion of the repetition time to the words of their songs. They will blunder along in a hopeless confusion of meaningless sounds. "But surely," people say, "children soon catch the words of a song!" Many, of course, are able to repeat a verse of six or eight lines of average length after once hearing, but some less intelligent children of even 10 or 11 years old, whom one is striving daily to make *think*, will

persist in the most absurd nonsense, until detected by their neighbours or through being called upon to sing alone.

(e) That with regard to writing—I speak particularly of transcription in Classes II and Ib—it is most important not to leave these children too regularly and too frequently alone. Such an arrangement, however, seems invariably necessary on account of there being seemingly more important lessons in other classes at the moment. The value of devoting more of one's own time to this than one is prompted to arrange for in drawing up a time-table, is enormous. We once completely reformed the writing of Class II by stopping all independent transcription for a time, and handing the class over to someone who came to help with Ia and Ib earlier in the morning, and who stayed on later for this express purpose. The result was most satisfactory. The writing "idea" (if I may so call it) was quite changed, and I believe that other children in the class benefit by it to-day. Transcription—or, rather, *copying* from the board—is very useful. It is a change, and it certainly makes for neatness. The teacher's hand shows how a transcribed piece should look; there is something, as it were, *between* the print and the child's own clumsy version. Experience has taught me the value of a little "copying."

(f) That a second daily reading lesson of about quarter of an hour for young children attending school in the afternoon is a tremendous help. Their progress compared with that of others of the same age attending only once a day is very marked. A special book—often the "Children's Heroes Series" set—for the term is taken.

I will refrain from enlarging upon the involved state of affairs when there are children working partly in one class and partly in another; nor will I discuss what happens when one has a child of 10 who cannot read. Suffice it to say that one is inclined to wish that either he would go away or else

that every other child would vanish into empty air, leaving one free to follow absolutely strictly *one* of the ideal Time-tables which have been so cleverly, so thoughtfully, and so comprehensively drawn up.

K. CLENDINNEN.

A SUMMER HOLIDAY ABROAD.

Five of us left Victoria Station at 10 a.m. on July 10th for Chamonix, and after finding the journey very long we were delighted to be at last on the mountain railway going up through beautiful woods and by waterfalls, from which we could see the highest chain of Alps and the finest glaciers of the country. As we wanted to be truly rural, we stayed at a little chalet at Les Tines, two miles beyond Chamonix, where we arrived just in time for midday *déjeuner* the next day. We were almost at the foot of the Mer de Glace and had one of the best possible views of Mont Blanc. The river Arve rushed by the chalet and made the air cool and pleasant, and quite close by were hayfields and woods with most beautiful wild flowers and lots of wild strawberries. We did things gradually, and in two days did a fairly big climb, up by the side of the Mer de Glace, by the "mauvais pas," then across the glacier, which is about a mile wide and not very easy walking even with nailed boots and alpenstocks; then still higher up another mountain, where we found snow in abundance and our first gentians and soldanella and other Alpine flowers.

As we were enjoying the view of the Chamonix valley an eagle flew past us, and we envied his wings before we had walked many more miles to the next glacier, where we found we had a descent of two hours before we could reach Chamonix and the welcome train that should take us our last two miles.

Next day we took train still further along the valley to Montroc, and walked over the Col de Balme, which divides France from Switzerland. There we found wonderful specimens of our dear Lake District flowers, butterwort, mountain primrose, etc., amongst which were masses of vernal gentian looking their very bluest in the sunshine. Then we went through fields of Alpen roses before we came to snow. The descent into Trient and the further walk of four miles to the station were exceptionally beautiful. We had long-distance views of villages nestling on mountain sides across wide valleys and of waterfalls from great heights. Imagine the shock we had on hearing that the next train home was 7.20, when dinner was at 7, and the relief when the brilliant idea struck us that there was an hour's difference in the time.

Our only mishap during our climbs was to break three thermos flasks at different times; it really was rather sad to see wine running away mixed with broken glass when we were very thirsty.

After a week in this lovely valley we went on to Zermatt and thoroughly enjoyed the journey down to the Rhone valley, amongst the vines, along to Visp, where we took another mountain train up by the dashing Mattervisp to Zermatt, over 5,000 feet above sea level. It took us nearly all day because travelling on the mountain railways is very slow and uncertain. If you ask any porter when you will arrive he shrugs his shoulders and says: "Ma foi, je ne sais pas."

Next day we did our biggest climb: that was up the Gornergrat, from which we had one of the most wonderful views of Switzerland. There were high mountains and huge glaciers all round us. We seemed to be quite close to Monte Rosa, and the Matterhorn looked just as high and stately as it did from Zermatt, although we had climbed over 5,000 more feet. It was a bright, cloudless day, and there was not a breath of

air at the top, and the glare of so much snow was so great that several people had mountain sickness. Coming down, we took long slides on the top of the snow, and lower down were particularly struck by the strong, sweet scent of the pine trees.

Zermatt itself is a little too full and fashionable for those who prefer the country. Everyone walks up and down its one street after dinner, listening to the band and shopping.

After a few days we again descended to the Rhone valley, and passed close by the Dent du Midi, then by the Lake of Geneva, and stayed a few days at Morges, about half way down the lake on the south side. There we had rather bad weather, so did not see the glorious blue of the lake with the view of the Alps beyond, but we had some good walks to a big old château and to Paderewski's house and garden, where we saw more grapes than you can imagine, and apples and pears growing in neat little paper bags. After a day at Lausanne and one at Geneva, where we saw the cathedrals and other places of interest, we went by night to Paris, where we heard for the first time rumours of wars. However, we stayed as long as we intended, and got home just in time with no inconvenience except that we were three hours late. How the hundreds of people who were just leaving Victoria for the same journey fared I do not know; the poor things never ought to have been allowed to start. In Paris we were most energetic and saw about as much as possible in five days, the Louvre being the only place we visited twice.

I will only add the addresses and prices of the places where we stayed, and shall be delighted to tell more details if anyone would ever like to go:

Les Tines.—Châlet des Tines, près Chamonix; 5 francs.

Zermatt.—Pension Alpina; 7 francs.

Paris.—Hôtel de Famille, 44, Rue Madame, Luxembourg; 6 francs.

E. E. FLOWER.